

WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

Readings: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29
Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8
Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23
John 14:23-29

6th Sunday of Easter
May 9, 2010

Word: Disciples of Christ have love for one another.

Theme: We are disciples of Christ when we obey His word. [Submission]

Promise: *"...my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him."* (Jn 14:23b)

Reflection:

Brothers and Sisters, when you go through the readings of the 6th Sunday of Easter, you will notice three things they have in common, and that is, as Christians we are called to do all things with the Spirit of Christ. In other words, we all are called: (1) to walk in Christian spirit; (2) to do all things in the Spirit; and, (3) to walk with the Spirit of Christ.

To walk in the Christian spirit involves embracing of certain characteristics. The first, and the most important, is the attribute of unity, all members being of one spiritual mind. Through unity, there is harmony. Through harmony, there is strength. Through strength, there is perseverance in the living faith. And in the end, those who are joined in the Christian spirit achieve their goal - eternal life and salvation through Jesus Christ.

As we see in the First Reading, the Christian spirit does not come by itself. One has to strive towards it by seeking the divine will of God and then embracing the authority of the Church. In the early days of the Church, certain individuals came down from Judea and taught that unless one was circumcised according to the custom of Moses, he could not be saved. Seeking the divine will of God on the matter, Paul, Barnabas and some of the others were sent to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders. Consequently the Church authorities made a decision and sent Barsabbas and Silas to report back to the believers. Through these progressive actions is seen the Christian spirit at work.

In the Second Reading, we perceived the Christian spirit at work through some of the descriptive words that are given to us. ***"I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb,"*** [Rev. 21:22-23]. Here we are able to perceive the unity of the people under one God, the Lamb. There are no idols. Nor are there any man-made religions whose leaders get the credit for establishing faiths that differ from the sacred teachings of Jesus. And, we also perceived the people's quality of holiness because they all belonged to the city of Jerusalem, the Holy City.

In the Gospel, we read and perceive that the Christian unity reigns among those who obeyed the command of Jesus. The command of Jesus was, ***"Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them,"*** [Jn. 14:23]. Those who love Jesus are of one spiritual mind with the others who also obey the command of the Lord.

When considering our presence in the celebration of the Eucharist and/or our Corporate Worship, oneness of mind and heart are signs of our Christian spirit. United in one faith in the Lord Jesus, we gather for Sunday and corporate worship to praise and adore the Lord, our God. In the Catholic spirit, we are united to receive the blessings that are bestowed upon those who receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist that is the Living Bread.

The second common factor that is found in all of the three readings is that we are called to do all things in the spirit. Jesus said, **"The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth,"** [Jn. 4:23-24].

What does it mean to do all things in the spirit or to worship in spirit? It means that when we received the Sacrament of Baptism, just as Jesus was raised from the dead, we become a new creation raised from death to walk a new life in Christ [Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12] (628). Without the Sacrament of Baptism through water and Spirit, we could not enter the Kingdom of God, [Jn. 3:5].

This gift of God, instituted through Jesus Christ in the New Covenant, fulfills the promises of the Old Testament. During the Sacrament of Baptism, we receive a new heart and a new human spirit, [Ezek. 11:19-20; 18:31]. Through our new heart, we have become children of light. We are blessed with a spiritual mind that enables us to worship God in spirit and in truth.

In the Gospel, we hear Jesus say, **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid,"** [Jn. 14:27]. When we do not do all things in the spirit, our hearts are troubled. We are afraid because deep inside we know that we are in disobedience and in the wrath of God. We are afraid because the Spirit of Christ talks to us in our hearts and reminds us that we are not walking in the spirit. The peace of Christ comes to us when we obediently submit ourselves to God's divine will through the authority of the Church. Then, we are blessed with divine peace; we are no longer troubled or afraid. The mixed feelings we may have, fade away.

The third common factor in the readings is that we are called to walk with the Spirit of Christ. When we walk with the Spirit of Christ, we shine in the fruit of the Spirit. These are **"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control,"** [Gal. 5:22-3].

Those who walk with the Spirit of Christ are led by the Spirit. When the apostles and the elders reviewed the issue of circumcision that Paul and Barnabas brought before them, it was done with the guidance and leadership of the Holy Spirit. This truth is affirmed in the content of the response that the Church authority sent to Antioch, Syria and Cilicia, which read: "For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us..." In other words, they were walking in the Spirit of Christ, proclaiming spiritual wisdom that had been made known to them through the Holy Spirit.

During the reading from the Gospel of John, Jesus made reference to the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father would send in His Name. Such was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost [Acts 2:1] when the Lord Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon His disciples, [Jn. 20:22; Acts 2:2-4]. At that moment, the official ministry of the Holy Spirit began on earth.

In making known to us the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit's ministry is twofold: To build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, the seat of its visible nature in Rome, and its invisible reflection in the holy city with its seat in Jerusalem where the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church had its beginnings. The unity of the two forms the mystical Body of Christ, the Church also being known as the Bride of Christ. The second goal is to sanctify us in Christ so we may be purified and transformed in the likeness of Jesus.

In consideration of all what has been said until now, in the Christian spirit, we are called to do all things in the spirit with the Spirit of Christ. The three applications of the word "spirit" cannot be separated. It is by the power of the Spirit of Christ that we become new creations, that we are being transformed into holy beings, and that we are being moved to imitate the love of Christ towards all our brothers and sisters. Without the Spirit of Christ, we would be spiritually dead.

Through the same Holy Spirit, we are drawn towards Jesus in the unity of the Christian spirit. Through the same Holy Spirit, we are sanctified in the likeness of Christ. Through the same Holy Spirit, the works of God are manifested through our humble persons who are subject to Christ in obedience and humility.

Suggested Personal Reflection Guide:

1. Who is the Holy Spirit to me? What is He to me?
2. Do I allow the Holy Spirit to control my life?
3. What are the things that I do to embrace the Christian spirit?

Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:

May 10, 2010 (Mon):	Acts 16:11-15; PS 149:1-6, 9; Jn 15:26 - 16:4
May 04, 2010 (Tue):	Acts 16:22-34; Ps 138:1-3, 7-8; Jn 16:5-11
May 05, 2010 (Wed):	Acts 17:15, 22 - 18:1; Ps 148:1-2, 11-14; Jn 16:12-15
May 06, 2010 (Thur):	Acts 18:1-8; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 16:16-20
May 07, 2010 (Fri):	Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; Ps 113:1-8; Jn 15:9-17
May 08, 2010 (Sat):	Jas 5:7-8, 16-18; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Jn 15:1-6

"Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!"